

Teacher Guide

Grades 3–4

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane

Kate DiCamillo

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THE MIRACULOUS JOURNEY OF EDWARD TULANE

by
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Teacher Guide

Written by
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Note

The 2007 Candlewick Press paperback edition of the novel, © 2006 by Kate DiCamillo, was used to prepare this guide. Page references may differ in other editions. Novel ISBN: 978-0-7636-4783-4

Please note: Parts of this novel deal with sensitive, mature issues. Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with them.

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Skills and Strategies

Comprehension

Creative thinking, identifying attributes, predicting, inferring, supporting judgments

Literary Elements

Story mapping, characterization, conflict, setting, theme, point of view, author's purpose

Vocabulary

Definitions, synonyms/antonyms, target words, homophones

Listening/Speaking

Discussions, dramatization, oral presentation, interviewing

Writing

Creative writing, personal narrative, poetry, diary, dialogue, essay

Critical Thinking

Brainstorming, research, compare/contrast, cause/effect, analysis, evaluation

Across the Curriculum

Social Studies—history, time line, *Queen Mary*, hobo nickel, dolls; Science—astronomy; Health—bullies, recycling; Music—lyrics, history; Math—pricing, computation, graphs; Art—design, illustration, crafts, string puppets

- Critical Thinking: Edward believes most stories are pointless. Complete the following sentence:
I think most stories are/aren't (circle one) pointless because _____.

- Comprehension: Write one to two paragraphs explaining whether a person's life can have a happy ending if that person does not love or has never been loved. Give examples to support your ideas.
- Creative Writing: Write a happy ending to Pellegrina's story. Your story should keep the main message that a happy ending requires love.

Chapters Six–Nine

Edward glimpses Abilene holding his pocket watch before he falls into the Atlantic Ocean. For 297 days, Edward lies face down on the ocean floor, thinking about the stars he cannot see, the princess who became a witch, and Pellegrina. A storm lifts Edward off the ocean floor, and he is caught in a fisherman's net. Thrilled to be out of the sea, Edward gets over the fisherman's wife naming him "Susanna" and dressing him in girls' clothes. Lawrence and Nellie treat Edward like their child, and Edward listens to everything they say. Then Lawrence and Nellie's daughter visits, and Edward's brief happiness seems spoiled.

Vocabulary

ridiculous
tremendous
muck
genuine
emotion
responsible
descent
brilliant
grizzled
gesture
clenched
dusk
jumble
horrified
daft

Discussion Questions

- What emotion does Edward feel when he lands on the ocean floor? Why do you think this is his first true emotion? Why does it happen now? (*Edward is afraid. Answers will vary. When Edward lives with Abilene, all his needs were met and his only thoughts were pessimistic. On the ocean floor, Edward is helpless, unable to change his situation. He is alone and afraid that he will remain on the ocean floor forever.*)
- Why does Edward feel Pellegrina is responsible for him being thrown overboard? Why does he compare Pellegrina to the witch in the story? (*Answers will vary. Edward's life changes after Pellegrina tells her story. Edward senses the story holds a message for him, but he does not know what the message is. He associates Pellegrina with a painful turn his life has taken and believes she is just like the witch who ruined the princess's life.*)
- How does Edward feel when he is lifted off the ocean floor? Does this make him feel as if he is being rescued? (*A powerful storm lifts Edward. He tumbles around in the water as his flag floats into the air. When he starts to sink, Edward cries for help and longs for rescue.*)
- What are Lawrence's first thoughts about Edward? How do his thoughts change even before he arrives home? Why would an adult talk to a child? (*At first, Lawrence refers to Edward as a toy that Nellie can repair and give to her child. Then, Lawrence notices that Edward seems to enjoy the ride home and is amused at how easy it is to talk to a toy. Answers will vary.*)
- What is Edward's first reaction upon meeting Nellie? What does she do that confuses him? (*Edward thinks Nellie is "a very discerning woman" [p. 64] because she describes him as fine. Nellie mistakes Edward for a girl rabbit and names him Susanna.*)

6. How does Edward overcome his humiliation at being dressed in girls' clothes? What valuable lessons is Edward learning? *(Compared to being alone on the ocean floor, what Edward wears is not really important. Answers will vary. Edward is learning to appreciate life and to be content with what he has.)*
7. Lawrence tells Edward that “[Nellie has] had her sadness, but she’s an all-right girl” (p. 61). What does Edward discover is the cause of Nellie’s sadness? How does this influence the way she treats Edward? *(Nellie’s son, Raymond, died of pneumonia when he was five years old. Nellie could not do anything to help Raymond, and she still thinks of him most nights. Lawrence and Nellie treat Edward as if he is their child.)*
8. Compare Edward’s daily life with Abilene to his life with Lawrence and Nellie. How is his life the same? How is it different? How has Edward changed since leaving Abilene? *(Answers will vary. Both owners treat Edward as a part of the family. They talk to him and place him so he feels included in their daily lives. Abilene’s lifestyle is elegant, while Lawrence and Nellie have a simple life. Edward’s clothes reflect his owners’ situations. With Abilene, Edward expects his needs to be met. With Lawrence and Nellie, Edward comes to appreciate less-than-perfect circumstances because almost anything is better than being alone in the ocean. Edward learns to listen while he is with Lawrence and Nellie.)*
9. **Prediction.** How will Lawrence and Nellie’s daughter affect Edward’s life?

Supplementary Activities

1. **Comprehension:** Imagine you’re Abilene. Write a diary entry about the day Edward falls overboard. Include your parents’ reactions and how long Edward affects your vacation.
2. **Science:** Lawrence tells Edward that he is never lost. He knows the location of the North Star. Write directions for finding the North Star. Include its astronomic name. How can you use its location to determine your latitude above the equator?
3. **Science:** Research constellations. Using a star map (available on the Internet), locate as many constellations as you can in the night sky. Write your observations in a journal. You may wish to make observations on a night a week for a month to check how constellation locations change.
4. **Music:** Nellie sings the lullaby, “Hush Little Baby,” to Edward. Compose new words to make the song apply to Edward.

I Predict...

Directions: Spend a few minutes looking at the novel's cover and flipping through its pages. What can you predict about the characters, the setting, and the problem in the novel? Write your predictions in the spaces below.

The Characters	The Setting	The Problem

From the information you gathered above, do you think you will enjoy reading this novel? Circle your response on the scale below.

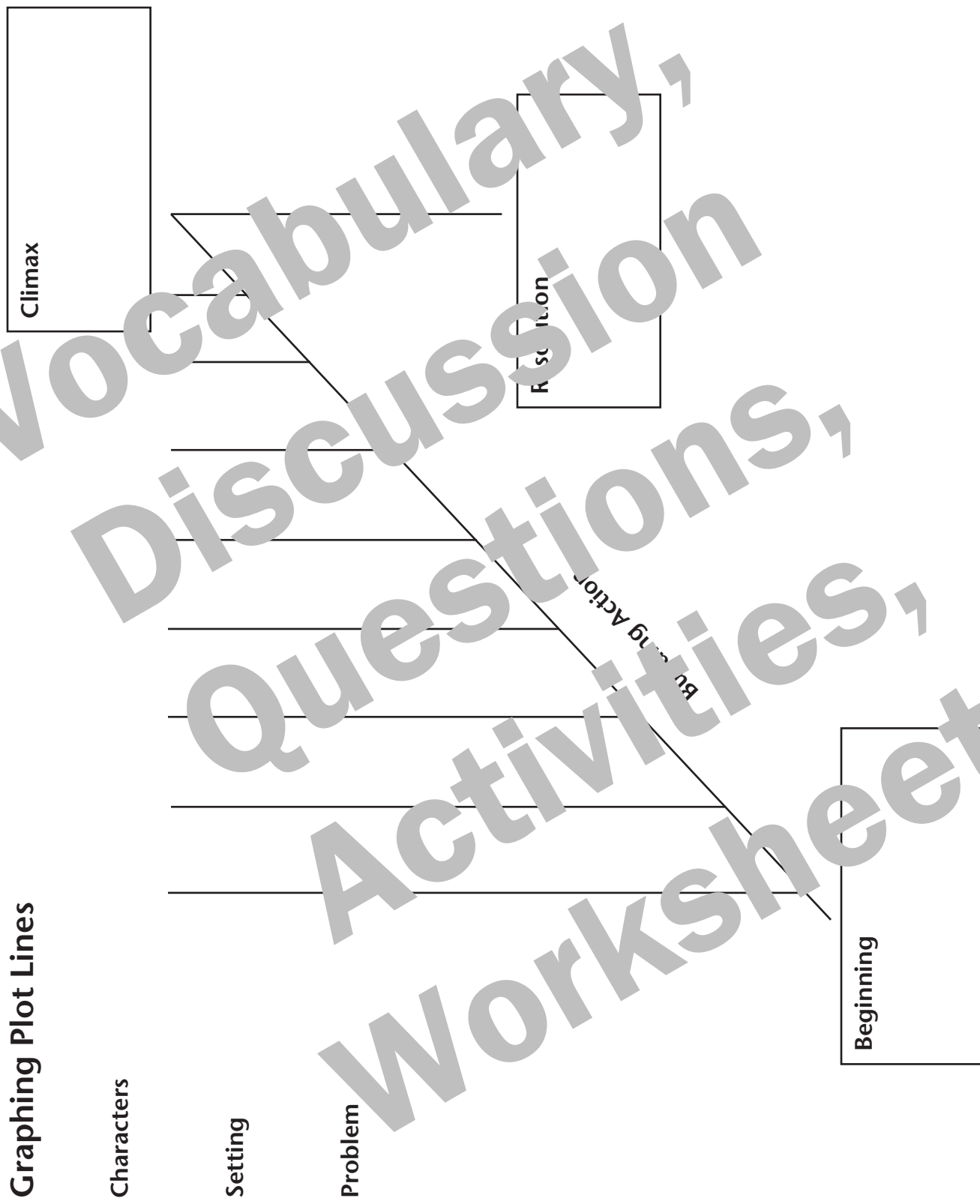
0 — 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10

I will not like this novel. I will really like this novel.

Explain your prediction on the lines below.

Plot Graph

Directions: Complete the chart below for *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*.



Foreshadowing Chart

Foreshadowing is the literary technique of giving clues to coming events in a story.

Directions: The illustration at the beginning of each chapter foreshadows events in that chapter. Analyze at least four examples below. Explain what clues the illustration contains, and then list the coming event that is suggested.

Illustration	Page #	Clues	Coming Event